

NORTH YORKSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

17 February 2021

STATEMENT OF CHAIRMAN

CARE AND INDEPENDENCE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Care Market Update

1. Over recent months, members have been informally briefed on how the Health and Adult Services directorate has responded to the challenges of the pandemic. Central to our discussions has been the impact of Covid 19 on the Care Market.
2. Care settings, whether they are nursing homes, residential homes or extra care, have been at the heart of our response. We have 235 of these settings in NY – more than any other area of Yorkshire, with high concentrations in Harrogate and Scarborough. This reflects the high number of people coming to retire to the County, as well as people being referred from West Yorkshire and Teesside.
3. The headlines discussed at the last meeting – the picture of course changes daily - were:
 - Residential and nursing occupancy dropped from an average of 94% in November 2019 to an average of 80%. This equates to an overall increase of available beds of 17.5%.
 - Increase in mortality due to Covid-19 has seen higher than average excess deaths.
 - Financial Sustainability survey has resulted in 32 providers expecting to face significant financial challenges in the next 12-18 months.
 - Non-regulated Day Care Service providers continue to be paid based on planned activity with a blended model of support in place consisting of virtual sessions, small group based activities and one to one support. We are working with 23 providers who are reporting challenges with reopening services.
4. The Adult Social Care Winter Plan includes commitment to deliver a designation scheme with the Care Quality Commission. In this context, premises have been designated for people leaving hospital who have tested positive for COVID-19 and are transferring to a care home. Anyone with Covid-19 positive test result being discharged into, or back into a registered care home setting must be discharged into an appropriate designated setting. These approved settings have been signed off by CQC and have policies, procedures, equipment and training in place to maintain infection prevention and control and they support the care needs of residents.
5. We were reassured that the market has been supported financially by a range of measures, including:
 - Compensatory Payments to residential, nursing, domiciliary care and non-regulated providers.
 - Payments in advance in line with annual uplift agreement.
 - Block purchasing of bed capacity to support hospital discharge and admission avoidance where appropriate.
 - Infection Prevention Control Fund National Personal Protective Equipment Portal.

- Supplier relief and Hardship processes in place.
6. We were pleased to see that overall capacity for testing and turnaround times for the polymerase chain reaction (PCR) testing and for lateral flow testing (LFT) continues to improve.
 7. In summary, the committee was pleased at the comprehensive and professional nature of the support offered.
 8. Looking ahead, I am sure members will want the committee to retain this focussed interest on residential and domestic care market responsibilities, including regulation, development and shaping. It is important, however, that Scrutiny casts its eye beyond not just what the council is doing, but also reviews how other organisations and partners are supporting vulnerable adults to help them live independently.

Draft Local Account

9. The Local Account for North Yorkshire Health and Adult Services for 2019/2020 is the directorate's own statement on how services have supported people across the county, how public money has been invested, and what the aims are in 2020/2021.
10. Like last year, members liked the revamped document - especially its accessible format. The description of how the service has worked with our partners, including care providers, the NHS, District and Borough Councils, Police, Fire Service, community and voluntary sector organisations is clear. It succinctly describes how we develop and deliver services jointly, streamlining the way we go about what we do to make us as efficient as possible.
11. In terms of achievements, it is heartening to read of the expansion in our range of preventative services, including the introduction of the Living Well Smoke Free service.
12. The claim that services have worked more than ever before with people, families and carers so that they help shape and co-design the way we deliver services, reflects what the committee has seen in its scrutiny work.

Future work

13. It is right that we retain a scrutiny interest in key service areas. However, I repeat the closing words of my last statement - in doing so we will continue to be mindful of the pressures on the service.

COUNTY COUNCILLOR KARIN SEDGWICK

2 February 2021